IN THE CLAIMS:

1. – 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A method of claiming ownership of a disk by a network device in a network storage system comprising the steps of:

writing ownership information to a predetermined area of the disk; and

setting a small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag for the disk to a state of network device ownership to provide a two part indicia of ownership for the disk, where the two part indicia of ownership are both written to the disk.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the ownership information further comprises a serial number of a network device.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the network device comprises a file server.

9. (Currently Amended) A network storage system comprising:

a plurality of network devices;

one or more switches, each network device connected to at least one of the one or more switch; and

a plurality of disks having a first ownership attribute written to a predetermined area of ~~the~~ each disk and a second ownership attribute in the form of a small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag, wherein the first and second ownership attribute are written to each disk, each disk connected to at least one of the plurality of switches.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The network storage system of claim 9, wherein the small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag is a small computer system interface level 3 persistent reservation tag.

12. (Currently Amended) The networked storage system of claim 9, wherein the small computer system interface ~~3 persistent~~ reservation tag is set such that only the network device may write to the disk.

13. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 9, wherein the first ownership attribute further comprises a serial number of the network device that owns that particular disk.

14. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 9, wherein each of the plurality of file servers can read data from each of the plurality of disks.

15. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 9, wherein only a network device that owns one of the plurality of disks can write data to the one disk.

16. (Original) The network storage system of claim 9, wherein the network devices comprise file servers.

17. (Currently Amended) A network storage system comprising:

one or more switches;

a plurality of disks; and

means for writing ownership information to a predetermined area of ~~a~~ each disk of the plurality of disks; and

means for setting a small computer system interface ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag of ~~a~~ each disk to provide a two part indicia of ownership, where the two part indicia of ownership are written to each disk.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The network storage system of claim 17, wherein the network devices comprise file servers.

20. (Currently Amended) A network storage system comprising:

one or more switches interconnected to form a switching fabric;

a plurality of disks, each of the disks connected to at least one of the switches, each disk storing a first ownership attribute to a predetermined area of a disk and each disk associated with a second ownership attribute in the form of a small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation; and

one or more network devices, interconnected with the switching fabric, each of the network devices being adapted to own a predetermined set of disks of the plurality of disks through use of the first and second ownership attributes.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 20, wherein the first ownership attribute further comprises a serial number of one of the one or more network devices.

24. (Currently Amended) The network storage system of claim 20, wherein the small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation is a small computer system interface level 3 persistent reservation.

25. (Original) The network storage system of claim 20, wherein each of the network devices further comprises a disk ownership table, the disk ownership table containing ownership data for each of the disks.

26. (Original) The network storage system of claim 25, wherein the ownership table further comprises a world wide name for each of the disks, the world wide name being used for identification of each of the disks.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium, including program instructions executing on network device, for performing the steps of:

writing ownership information to a predetermined area of a disk; and

setting a small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag for the disk to a state of network device ownership to provide a two part indicia of ownership for the disk, where the two part indicia of ownership are both written to the disk.

28. (Currently Amended) A method for a network device to manage ownership of one or more storage devices in a network storage system, comprising the steps of:

reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

in response to reading the ownership information, creating an ownership table that identifies the one or more storage devices owned by the network device;

reading a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag from each storage device;

comparing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

configuring the one or more storage devices identified in the ownership table into at least one volume for use by the network device.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising:

setting ownership information at the predetermined area of each storage device.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 wherein the step of configuring further comprises:

organizing the one or more storage devices into at least one Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID) group.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising:

wherein the predetermined area of the one or more storage devices is sector zero of the one or more storage devices.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising:

wherein the ownership information is a serial number of the network device that owns that particular storage device.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising:

wherein the ownership table includes a world wide name for each of the storage devices, the world wide name being used to identify each of the storage devices.

34. (Currently Amended) A network device for managing ownership of one or more storage devices in a network storage system, comprising the steps of:

means for reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

in response to reading the ownership information, means for creating an ownership table that identifies the one or more storage devices owned by the network device;

means for reading a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag from each storage device;

means for comparing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

means for configuring the one or more storage devices identified in the ownership table into at least one volume for use by the network device.

35. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing executable program instructions for managing ownership of one or more storage devices in a network storage system, the executable program instructions comprising program instructions for:

reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

in response to reading the ownership information, creating an ownership table that identifies the one or more storage devices owned by the network device;

reading a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag from each storage device;

comparing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

configuring the one or more storage devices identified in the ownership table into at least one volume for use by the network device.

36. (Currently Amended) A network storage system, comprising:

one or more storage devices, each storage device having a predetermined area for storing ownership information and each storage device having a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag;

at least one network device having an ownership table constructed based upon the ownership information from each storage device;

the at least one network device having an ownership layer for comparing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~level 3 persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

the at least one network device having a disk storage layer for configuring the one or more storage devices identified in the ownership table into at least one volume for use by the network device.

37. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 36 further comprising:

the ownership layer adapted to set ownership information at the predetermined area of each storage device.

38. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 36 further comprising:

the disk storage layer organizing the one or more storage devices into at least one Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID) group.

39. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 36 further comprising:

wherein the predetermined area of the one or more storage devices is sector zero of the one or more storage devices.

40. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 36 further comprising:

wherein the ownership information is a serial number of the network device that owns that particular storage device.

41. (Previously Presented) The network storage system of claim 36 further comprising:

wherein the ownership table includes a world wide name for each of the storage devices, the world wide name being used to identify each of the storage devices.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 wherein the small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag and the ownership information at the predetermined area of the disk indicate ownership by the same network device.

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 wherein the small computer system interface ~~persistent~~ reservation tag is a small computer system interface level 3 persistent reservation tag.

44. (Currently Amended) A method for a network device to manage ownership of one or more storage devices in a network storage system, comprising the steps of:

reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

accessing a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag associate with each storage device;

comparing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

configuring the one or more storage devices for use by the network device.

45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44 wherein the small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag is a small computer system interface level 3 (SCSI-3) persistent reservation tag.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44 further comprising:

in response to reading the ownership information, creating an ownership table on the network device that identifies the one or more storage devices owned by the network device; and

using the ownership table to configure the one or more storage devices into at least one volume.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44 further comprising:

setting ownership information at the predetermined area of each storage device.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44 further comprising:

wherein the predetermined area of the one or more storage devices is sector zero of the one or more storage devices.

49. (Currently Amended) A network storage system, comprising:

means for reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

means for accessing a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag associate with each storage device;

means for comparing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

means for configuring the one or more storage devices for use by the network device.

50. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing executable program instructions for manage ownership of one or more storage devices, the executable program instructions comprising program instructions for:

reading ownership information from a predetermined area of each storage device;

accessing a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag associate with each storage device;

comparing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to match the ownership information; and

configuring the one or more storage devices for use by the network device.

51. (Currently Amended) A network storage system comprising:

a plurality of disks having a first ownership attribute written to a known and constant location across all the disks and a second ownership attribute in the form of a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to provide a two part indicia of ownership; and

a network device with an ownership layer for comparing the SCSI persistent reservation tag to the ownership information stored in the known and constant location of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI persistent reservation tag to match the ownership information stored in the known and constant location.

52. (Currently Amended) A method for a network device to manage ownership of one or more storage devices in a network storage system, comprising the steps of:

reading ownership information of each storage device from a known and constant location across all storage devices;

accessing a small computer system interface (SCSI) ~~persistent~~ reservation tag associate with each storage device; and

comparing the SCSI ~~persistent~~ reservation tag to the ownership information of the same storage device and, if there is not a match, changing the SCSI persistent reservation tag to match the ownership information stored on the storage device in the known and constant location.

Please add new claim 53

53. (New) A method, comprising:

writing ownership information to a predetermined area of the disk to claim write ownership by a first server;

setting a small computer system interface (SCSI) reservation tag to a state of the first server ownership to provide a two part indicia of ownership for the first server; and

determining, by a second server, the disk is owned by the first server by reading the ownership information in the predetermined area of the disk.